

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE



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Higher Education Commission To Maintain Focus on Serving the Students and People of California

January 10, 2003—Sacramento – Governor Gray Davis released today his 2003-04 budget that proposes general fund support of \$700,000 for the Postsecondary Education Commission – an independent, objective, non-partisan state agency that advises the Governor and Legislature regarding postsecondary education. “This level of funding will greatly impinge upon our ability to fulfill the vital responsibility we have to serve the public,” said Robert L. Moore, the Commission’s Director. “More than ever, policy makers need an independent voice to assist them in dealing with how best to continue to provide access to an increasing number of California students in the most cost effective and efficient manner,” he said.

“I recognize that the current budget crisis necessitates very tough decisions and that the magnitude of the State’s fiscal problems has forced the Governor to make decisions he otherwise would not have made,” said Alan Arkatov, Chairman of the Commission. “Our advice and counsel has assisted state leaders in making strong and thoughtful policy and fiscal decisions regarding the state higher education systems and we will continue to do so,” he said. Arkatov added, “The Commission faced a similar proposed level of funding last year and was able to convince the Governor and Legislature that more was justified. We expect that we will again demonstrate our value and that the final budget for 2003-04 will contain a significantly higher level of funding than the amount in the budget released today.”

The Commission, which was established in 1974, plays a critical role in the planning, coordination, and dissemination of information regarding colleges and universities in the state. “I am convinced that this agency is absolutely necessary to the well being of education in California, and am confident that we will demonstrate this fact during the coming months as difficult decisions are made on how to protect access, affordability, and accountability while reducing expenditures for education,” said Mr. Moore. “I see our first responsibility as being to serve the public in the most effective way possible, and I intend to continue our focus on addressing the key issues that affect the delivery of educational opportunities to the people of California,” he said.

Further information about higher education in California may be obtained through the website of the Postsecondary Education Commission at www.cpec.ca.gov.